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TITLE: Development and Implementation of Civil Support Teams for
Weapons of Mass Destruction

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95. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CIVIL SUPPORT TEAMS FOR WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Local fire, police, and emergency medical services are usually first on the scene of an intentional release of a biological, chemical, or radiological agent. These agencies frequently do not have specialized training and equipment to conduct secondary, detailed site assessments to confirm the presence of an agent, model potential transport of the agent in the environment, and communicate potential public health and safety hazards to decision makers, the news media, and the public. National Guard Civil Support Teams have been developed in the USA to provide such support to State and local agencies. These teams include a command and control element, agent survey and detection units, an advanced communications element, an operations section with advanced modeling capability, a medical section to provide occupational health and safety support and to identify health hazards posed by agents, and a logistics section to provide materiel support. These teams have been used to provide advanced training to local first responders, and to support actual responses involving intentional releases of chemicals into the environment. Team capabilities and equipment were discussed in detail during a workshop conducted prior to the World Congress on Chemical and Biological Terrorism.

KEYWORDS

Weapons of mass destruction, chemicals, biological, civil support, National Guard